



Montana
Office of Public Instruction
Denise Juneau, State Superintendent

Model Lesson Plan

Traditional Games

Grade One

Rock in the Fist

Stage 1 Desired Results

Established Goals

Health Enhancement Standard 7, Benchmark 4.1: Interact with friends and others through participation in **dual and team games**.

Health Enhancement Standard 6, Benchmark 4.2: ... **Tell ways to show** care, consideration, and respect of self and others (**parents, peers, elders**).

Essential Understanding 2: There is great diversity among individual American Indians as identity is developed, defined and redefined by many entities, organizations, and people. A continuum of Indian identity, unique to each individual, ranges from assimilated to traditional. There is no generic American Indian.

Understandings

1. Montana Indian cultures have values for winning or losing.

Essential Question

1. How is winning or losing shown in traditional Indian games?

Students will be able to...

1. Play Rock in the Fist with correct rules.
2. Participate in a giveaway with a generous attitude.

Students will know...

1. How to play the "Rock in the Fist" game with correct rules.
2. How to behave with care for opponents' feelings (compassion).
3. How to take part in a giveaway.

Stage 2 Assessment Evidence

Performance Tasks:

1. Playing Rock in the Fist with correct rules.
2. Participating in the giveaway.

Stage 3 Learning Plan

Teaching Area

Empty space approximately 20' x 30' (indoors or outdoors or in a gym)

Equipment needed

One small rock to fit in a hand comfortably "without showing" for each student and three counting sticks per student.

Traditional Games Grade 1 Rock in the Fist (continued)



Photo courtesy of DeeAnna Brady-Leader

Game Rules

Rock in Fist. This is considered a hiding game or an Indian youth game that leads up to the hand or stick games played by adults. Players sit across from each other. On the floor between them is one small rock and three sticks on a piece of tanned hide or trade cloth. The rock should be small enough to fit in a hand without “showing” (by larger grasp) the rock. The sticks can be 6” to 12” long and decorated or just simple-cut sticks. The person hiding the rock exchanges the rock, from hand to hand, in front or in back of his/her body, or under a shirt or cloth. When ready to “show,” both hands must be put forward to the other player with fists closed in up, down, or any position to show “ready for guess.” The player who is guessing may take as much time as needed to make a decision by observing and sensing, then making a decision by *pointing* to the hand that they think holds the rock (It is considered bad manners to touch the hand). If the player guesses wrong, the hider gains a stick, which is placed in front of him/her. If the player guesses right, no stick is awarded, but the “guesser” now gets the rock and he/she will be the “hider.”

When all three sticks are gone from the middle, the game is not over until one player has won all three sticks back from the other player. Students play, gaining sticks from each other, until all sticks are on one side. After everyone has learned to play the game, a tournament can be held.

Traditional Games Grade 1 Rock in the Fist (continued)

Tournament Play: Divide into groups of players so each has a partner that they will play against in the first round. All players are facing each other in two straight lines. If a player wins the first round they will move up to the next row and play the next player who advances to the second row. Players who lose the first round stay in their row but must play another person who has lost their first round. Players will advance out of the first row as they get a win, thereby moving to the second row where they play until they get a win in the second row, thereby moving up to the third row. If there are 26 players, each player should have their own set of sticks and a rock. Place them in the tournament space as shown below:

X O				
X O				
X O				
X O	X O			
X O	X O	X O		
X O	X O	X O	X O	
X O	X O	X O	X O	X O
X O	X O	X O	X O	
X O	X O			
X O				
X O				
X O				
X O				
^	^	^	^	^
FIRST ROUND	SECOND ROUND	THIRD ROUND	FOURTH ROUND	WINNER

As players advance through the winner's station, the game will have first place by the first student to pass through the winner station, the second by second winner, and so on, until you have five places for the giveaway.

Giveaway Rules

After the players have practiced the game enough to know the rules, each player places a small object on a blanket in front of the room: pencils, erasers, pennies (if money is allowed), plastic pencil sharpeners. This is the "giveaway" blanket for the end of the game. The winner and second, third, fourth, and fifth places will do the giveaway. The second, third, fourth and fifth place players take the corners of the blanket. The winner will choose a gift from the blanket (usually the nicest item in the blanket) for his/her toughest competitor, and then going around the blanket to each of the other places, a gift is given by the winner. Then the blanket goes on the inside of a circle of the rest of the players with the winner giving each person a gift and each person generously giving care and "thank you" or "congratulations" to the winner. The last item in the blanket is for the winner. He/she takes it and thanks all of the players for "good games" and for "trying their best." Some like to honor the last person in the back row who never won but kept playing because that person played with "great heart" never quitting.

Traditional Games Grade 1 Rock in the Fist (continued)

Vocabulary:

Observation - The act or power of noticing, seeing with intention of learning.

Values - actions of “worth” or “not of worth” to others.

Giveaway - Presenting gifts to persons who are being honored for their values or actions.

Intuition - The immediate knowing or learning of something without the conscious use of reasoning.

Concepts

Game: Participants play to learn the rules of the game, to improve observation skills, and gain skills in understanding winning and losing. Respecting the feelings of winner or loser is important. {Learning care, compassion, cleansing, through a “give-away”}

The games of Montana Indians that were called “games of chance and intuition” were used to develop keen observations of people and the environment. This game of “Rock in the Fist” was a way *to develop observations about others and about self*. American Indian culture valued humble behavior and keen observation.

American Indians placed less value on “winning” by:

- a. Valuing a humble behavioral nature (not bragging and by sharing winnings)*
- b. Giving away any prizes won, to those who were the hardest competitors (Those who made the winner try harder, thus do his/her best).*

Safety

If games are set-up on gym floor, make students aware to look for game-sets as they move up one row after winning.

Resources

Books

Cajete, Gregory. (2005) *Spirit of the Game: An Indigenous Wellspring*, Kivaki Press, Skyand, NC.

Cullin, Stewart, *Games of the North American Indians*, New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1975.

Holmes, W.H., *Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution 1902-1903*, Washington Government Printing Office, 1907.

International Traditional Games Society, *Blackfeet Children’s Games*, (June, 2013)

Note: Blackfeet Handgame on page 269 of both the Cullin and Holmes books.

Traditional Games Grade 1 Rock in the Fist (continued)

DVD

Eagle Watch and International Traditional Games Society, *Recovery of American Indian Games* (available from I.T.G.S., P.O. Box 408, East Glacier Park, MT, 59434). More information:

www.traditionalnativegames.org

Web sites

Great Falls Schools: Indian Resource Library (books with games list)

<http://www.gfps.k12.mt.us/> - click on departments, choose: Indian Education Program/Library

International Traditional Games Society, www.traditionalnativegames.org

Montana Office of Public Instruction, Indian Education for All -

<http://opi.mt.gov/Programs/IndianEd/Index.html>